

We claim:

1. A method comprising:
 - receiving, from a customer, a request for a product to be dispensed by a vending machine,
 - 5 in which the request indicates a first product;
 - providing a plurality of selectable menu options, each of which defines at least one customer service issue;
 - receiving, from the customer, a selection of at least one of the menu options, thereby defining an indication of a customer service issue;
 - 10 determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue; and
 - providing, to the customer, an offer for a second product that is not the first product.
2. The method of claim 1, in which providing an offer comprises:
 - providing an offer for one of
 - 15 the second product, and
 - a refund.
3. The method of claim 1, in which providing an offer for the second product comprises:
 - determining that a sales velocity of the second product is less than a threshold.
- 20 4. The method of claim 1, in which determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue comprises:
 - determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on sales velocity of the second product.
- 25 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - determining that the first product is unable to be dispensed from the vending machine; and
 - disabling the ability to request the first product.

6. A method comprising:

receiving, from a customer, a request for a product to be dispensed by a vending machine, in which the request indicates a first product;

determining that the vending machine has malfunctioned.

5 providing a plurality of selectable menu options, each of which defines at least one customer service issue;

receiving, from the customer, a selection of at least one of the menu options, thereby defining an indication of a customer service issue;

determining that a sales velocity of a second product is less than a threshold; and

10 determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on the sales velocity; and

providing, to the customer, a compensation code that is redeemable for the second product.

15 7. A method comprising:

receiving, from a customer, a request for a product to be dispensed by a vending machine; determining that a customer service issue exists;

determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue; and

20 providing a resolution to the customer, in which the resolution includes providing an offer for a second product other than a first product indicated by the request.

8. The method of claim 7, in which determining that a customer service issue exists comprises:

receiving, from the customer, an indication of a customer service issue.

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9. The method of claim 8, further comprising:

providing a plurality of selectable menu options, each of which defines at least one customer service issue;

and in which

30 receiving, from the customer, an indication of a customer service issue comprises:

receiving, from the customer, a selection of at least one of the menu options.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising:
determining diagnostic data of the vending machine; and
determining, based of the diagnostic data, at least one of the plurality of selectable menu options.
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11. The method of claim 7, in which determining that a customer service issue exists comprises:
determining that the vending machine has malfunctioned.
- 10 12. The method of claim 11, in which
the request includes
an indication of a first product to be dispensed, and in which
determining that the vending machine has malfunctioned comprises:
determining that the vending machine has failed to dispense the first product.
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13. The method of claim 12, in which
determining that the vending machine has failed to dispense the first product comprises:
determining that the vending machine has dispensed a product that is not the first product.
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14. The method of claim 11, in which
determining that the vending machine has malfunctioned comprises:
determining that the vending machine has not processed payment correctly.
- 25 15. The method of claim 14, in which
determining that the vending machine has not processed payment correctly comprises:
determining that the vending machine has not properly credited payment that is tendered by the customer.
- 30 16. The method of claim 14, in which
determining that the vending machine has not processed payment correctly comprises:
determining that the vending machine has not properly dispensed payment that is due to the customer.

17. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
determining diagnostic data of the vending machine.

- 5 18. The method of claim 17, in which determining diagnostic data of the vending machine
comprises at least one of:
assessing data in a database;
receiving an indication of a customer service issue from a customer;
generating an image of at least a portion of the vending machine; and
10 receiving data from a sensor that is operable to sense a condition of the vending machine.

19. The method of claim 7, in which providing a resolution to the vending machine customer
comprises at least one of:
providing to the customer a product other than a product indicated by the request;
15 providing the customer with money via the vending machine;
establishing a credit balance of the vending machine;
applying credit toward a customer account of the customer;
providing a compensation code to the customer;
providing to the customer a voucher that is redeemable for a benefit from the vending
20 machine;
providing to the customer a voucher that is redeemable for a benefit from another vending
machine; and
providing to the customer a voucher that is redeemable for a product from a retail store.

- 25 20. The method of claim 7, in which providing an offer for a second product other than a first
product indicated by the request comprises:
providing an offer for one of
the second product other than the first product indicated by the request, and
a refund.
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21. The method of claim 7, in which providing an offer for a second product other than a first
product indicated by the request comprises:
determining that a sales velocity of the second product is less than a threshold; and
providing an offer for the second product.
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22. The method of claim 7, in which determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue comprises:
determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on coin inventory.

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23. The method of claim 7, in which determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue comprises:
determining whether to provide a resolution to the customer service issue based on sales velocity of a product.

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24. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
determining that a third product is unable to be dispensed from the vending machine; and disabling the ability of a customer to request the third product.

15 25. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
recording data associated with the customer service issue; and determining a unique identifier for the customer service issue.

26. The method of claim 25, further comprising:
20 determining a resolution based on the recorded data; and communicating an indication of the determined to the customer.

27. The method of claim 25, further comprising:
receiving information which identifies the customer.

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28. The method of claim 25, further comprising:
outputting, to the customer, the unique identifier.

29. The method of claim 25, in which outputting, to the customer, the unique identifier
30 comprises:
displaying an alphanumeric code.

30. The method of claim 7, in which recording data associated with the customer service issue comprises:

- determining diagnostic data of the vending machine;
- recording the diagnostic data.